

**CLAIMS**

1. Cosmetic composition, characterized in that it contains at least one poly- $\alpha$ -olefin obtainable by subjecting at least one primary alcohol to dehydrating polymerization at 60 to 340°C in the presence of acidic alumino layer silicate, the primary alcohol being selected from the group consisting of
  - a) unsaturated monofunctional alcohols,
  - b) branched monofunctional alcohols and
  - 10 c) difunctional alcohols.
2. Cosmetic composition as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the primary alcohol contains 6 to 72 carbon atoms and more particularly 6 to 24 carbon atoms.
- 15 3. Cosmetic composition as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the group b) alcohol used is an alcohol selected from the group of branched alcohols having
  - b1) at least one methyl group and, more particularly, 1 to 6 methyl branches in the alkyl chain,
  - 20 b2) a C<sub>2-18</sub> branch in the alkyl chain and
  - b3) a C<sub>2-18</sub> branch in the  $\alpha$ -position to the terminal CH<sub>2</sub>OH group.
4. Cosmetic composition as claimed in claim 3, characterized in that a  
25 Guerbet alcohol, more particularly 2-ethylhexyl alcohol, or isononyl alcohol is used as the alcohol.
5. Cosmetic composition as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that a linear alcohol is used as the group a) alcohol.
6. Cosmetic composition as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4,  
30 characterized in that the alcohol is selected from group b) or c) and the

poly- $\alpha$ -olefin is hydrogenated after the dehydrating polymerization.

7. Cosmetic composition as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that it is present in the form of a w/o or o/w emulsion.

8. Cosmetic composition as claimed in any of claims 1 to 7, 5 characterized in that it contains 1 to 50% by weight, preferably 5 to 40% by weight and more particularly 5 to 25% by weight of oil components.

9. Cosmetic composition as claimed in any of claims 1 to 8, characterized in that the percentage content of the at least one poly- $\alpha$ -olefin, based on the total quantity of oil components, is 0.1 to 100% by 10 weight, preferably 1 to 50% by weight, more preferably 1 to 20% by weight and most preferably 3 to 20% by weight.

10. A cosmetic composition as claimed in any of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that it contains 0.1 to 20% by weight, preferably 1 to 15% by weight and more particularly 1 to 10% by weight of a surface-active 15 substance or a mixture of surface-active substances.

11. The use of poly- $\alpha$ -olefin obtainable by subjecting at least one primary alcohol to dehydrating polymerization at 60 to 340°C in the presence of acidic alumino layer silicate, the primary alcohol being selected from the group consisting of

20

- a) unsaturated monofunctional alcohols,
- b) branched monofunctional alcohols and
- c) difunctional alcohols,

25 and the products of primary alcohols of groups b) and c) hydrogenated after the dehydrating polymerization as oil components in cosmetic or pharmaceutical preparations.